

## **Message from the Governor**

Economic development in North Carolina has always been guided by three core beliefs: progress, education, and innovation. Our state's biotechnology industry has been built on these beliefs. Today it is an essential economic engine that can benefit all North Carolinians.

North Carolina's biotechnology industry ranks among the nation's five largest, with more than 150 companies employing 18,500 people and generating annual revenues of \$3 billion. Despite the economic downturn, this industry is growing 10 to 15 percent a year. Our universities are discovering and developing new technologies, new companies are being created, established companies are expanding, and companies are moving new products toward the market.

Although we have had much success, I believe that we have only scratched the surface of North Carolina's potential in biotechnology. To reach that potential, we need a clear roadmap to the state's biotechnology future — a plan that fully taps North Carolina's many resources to create jobs and products for today and the future.

With this imperative in mind, last summer I asked former governors Jim Hunt and Jim Martin to chair a blue ribbon steering committee charged with developing a strategic plan for maintaining and improving North Carolina's strong position in biotechnology. For the past six months, with able support from the North Carolina Biotechnology Center, the best and brightest scientists, educators, business and government leaders, university and community college leaders, economic developers, and biotechnology experts from every corner of North Carolina have been working hard to develop this plan.

This report, *New Jobs Across North Carolina: A Strategic Plan for Growing the Economy Statewide through Biotechnology*, is the culmination of that effort. It includes recommendations on how we can attract and grow new companies; train and improve our workforce; strengthen partnerships among businesses, universities and community colleges, and government; and improve math and science K-12 education.

*New Jobs Across North Carolina* should be carefully considered. I know that my administration and especially the Department of Commerce will take advantage of this report as we develop next steps in economic development strategy and determine how best to position North Carolina to gain the economic and social benefits from biotechnology.

North Carolina should be on every company's short list of places to carry out biotechnology research, development, testing, and manufacturing. Working together, I believe that we can and will achieve that goal.

— *Michael F. Easley*  
*Governor, State of North Carolina*